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ABSTRACT

This tool contains a series of checklists to assist school and community leaders in creating or strengthening community school partnerships. The first checklist helps assess the development of the community school partnership. The second checklist helps take inventory of existing programs and services in or connected to the school that support children, youth, families, and other community residents. The third checklist helps catalogue the funding sources that support these programs and services. When completed, these checklists can serve as a planning tool to develop strategies to strengthen the partnership, improve coordination of existing programs and services, and expand current levels of support. A list of 34 additional resources is included. (SLD)

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Strengthening Partnerships: Community School Assessment Checklist

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Coalition for Community Schools

The FINANCE PROJECT

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STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS: COMMUNITY SCHOOL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

In many communities, partnerships between schools and other community organizations and agencies are helping to create supports that enable children and youth to learn and succeed and help families and communities to thrive. These partnerships bring together diverse individuals and groups, including principals, teachers, school superintendents, school boards, community-based organizations, youth development organizations, health and human service agencies, parents and other community leaders, to expand opportunities for children, families, and communities.

Creating a successful community school partnership is a complex, challenging, and time-consuming task. To be effective, partnerships need to engage in a thoughtful process to define a vision and clear goals. Partnerships need to have effective governance and management structures to ensure that programs operate efficiently and the partnership is responsive to community needs. Community school partnerships also need to draw from a broad range of perspectives and expertise—from inside the school as well as from other organizations and individuals within the community. Finally, community school partnerships need to connect, coordinate, and leverage resources from a variety of sources to support and continue their work.

This tool contains a series of checklists to assist school and community leaders in creating and/or strengthening community school partnerships.

- The first checklist helps you to assess the development of your community school partnership.
- The second checklist helps you to take inventory of existing programs and services in or connected to your school that support children, youth, families, and other community residents.
- The third checklist helps you to catalogue the funding sources that support these programs and services.

Once completed, these checklists can serve as a planning tool to develop strategies to strengthen your partnership, improve coordination of existing programs and services, and/or to expand current levels of support.

By Martin J. Blank and Barbara Hanson Langford

September 2000

I. Community School Partnership Assessment

Building and maintaining effective community school partnerships requires dedicated time and ongoing attention to the collaborative process. This checklist focuses on the **process** of bringing partners together and working to achieve desired results. This checklist can help partnerships to focus on, assess, and improve the quality of their collaborative efforts.

Our partnership has developed a clear vision.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 **Agree**

Our partnership has collaboratively identified the results we want to achieve for children, youth, families, and our community.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 **Agree**

Our partnership has successfully engaged a broad base of partners from a range of individuals and organizations representing the school and the community.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 **Agree**

Our partnership has developed strategies for coordinating and linking the array of supports and opportunities for children, youth, families, and community members that are available at or connected to the school.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 **Agree**

Our partnership has established a clear organizational structure. Our partnership has agreed upon the roles that individual partners will play, and ensured that all partners understand and accept the responsibilities of those roles.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 **Agree**

All partners involved in our community school have an understanding of who the other partners are, what organizations they come from, and what those organizations do.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 **Agree**

Our partnership regularly communicates with all partners to keep them informed about its work.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 **Agree**

Our partnership engages in activities to create awareness about and increase support for the work of the partnership.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 **Agree**

Our partnership has identified and mobilized resources (financial and other) from partner organizations and other entities throughout the community.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 **Agree**

II. Community School Program and Service Checklist

An important first step for school and community leaders seeking to create or expand community school partnerships is to assess the broad range of resources that are currently available within or connected to their school. Some of these programs and services may be directly supported by the school; others may be supported by community organizations and agencies. This checklist helps you to take inventory of the programs and services already administered by the school and its partners. Once you know what programs and services exist, your challenge is to make sure these programs and services are strategically coordinated to achieve desired results and to identify new programs and services that may be needed.

Programs And Services	Program Administrator				If not run by the school, list name of partner
	School or School District	Community-based Organization	Local Public Agency	Other	
SUPPORTS FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN AND YOUTH					
Academic Enrichment/ Tutoring/Remedial Education					
Arts, Music, and Cultural Programs					
Before- and/or After-School Programs					
Community Service/ Service Learning					
Conflict Resolution					
Family Life/Personal Skills/ Teen Parenting Programs					
Literacy					
Mentoring					
Recreation/Sports					
School Nurse					
Substance Abuse and/or Violence Prevention Programs					
Other					
Other					

Programs And Services	Program Administrator				If not run by the school, list name of partner
	School or School District	Community-based Organization	Local Public Agency	Other	
COMMUNITY SUPPORTS					
Adult Education/ GED/Literacy					
Parenting Education					
Health Education					
Health Care and/or Dental Services					
Early Care and Education/ Pre-K/Head Start					
Job Training					
Substance Abuse Prevention					
Violence Prevention					
Mental Health Services					
Family Support Center					
Other					
Other					

III. Community School Funding Source Assessment

Once you've taken inventory of the current programs and services operating in or connected to your school, the next step is to identify the sources of funding that support these services. In some cases, funding may come from federal, state, or local government agencies. In other cases, funding may come from private sources, such as community-based organizations or private foundations. This assessment can be used to catalogue existing funding sources that support a community school as well as to identify new funding sources to expand current programs and services.

SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES	
School and/or School District (i.e. Title I)	
Community-Based Organizations (i.e. YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, faith-based organizations)	
Universities and Colleges (i.e. work study or service learning students, professional development training)	
Federal Funds (i.e. food and nutrition funds, 21st Century Learning Community Learning Centers, VISTA, AmeriCorp)	
State Funds (i.e. funds from state departments of education, health and/or human services, and juvenile justice)	
City or County Funds (i.e. funds from local departments of human services, parks and recreation, and juvenile justice)	
Private Foundations (i.e. local community foundations, national foundations)	
Private Businesses	
PTA	
Participation Fees	
Other	

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Strengthening Community School Partnerships

The Collaborative Wellness Kit, Together We Can, Institute for Educational Leadership, 202-822-8405.

A Compact for Learning: An Action Handbook for Family-School-Community Partnerships, Partnership for Family Involvement in Education & US Department of Education, 800-USA-LEARN.

Creating A Community Agenda: How Governance Partnerships Can Improve Results for Children, Youth, and Families. Center for the Study of Social Policy, Washington, D.C., 1998, 217-371-1565.

Getting to the Grassroots: Neighborhood Organizing and Mobilization. A Matter of Commitment—Community Collaboration Guidebook Series #6, Charles Bruner & Maria Chavez, NCSI Clearinghouse, 1997, 515-280-9027.

Learning Together: The Developing Field of School-Community Initiatives, Atelia Melaville and Martin J. Blank, The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, 1998, 800-645-1766.

Partnership Self-Assessment Tool and Guide to Successful Public-Private Partnerships for Child Care, Child Care Partnership Project, nccic.org/ccpartnerships or 202-628-4200.

Schools and Community Partnerships: Revitalizing Urban Schools and Neighborhoods, Michelle Cahill. Cross-Cities Campaign for Urban School Reform, 312-322-4880.

Strong Families, Strong Schools: Building Community Partnerships for Learning, U.S. Department of Education, 1994, 800-USA-LEARN.

A Training Guide for Organizing Collaborative Enterprises, United Way of America & The Institute for Educational Leadership, 1999, 202-822-8405.

Resources from the Coalition for Community Schools (www.communityschools.org or 202-822-8405 ext. 45)

Community Schools: Partnerships for Excellence. May 2000.

A Policy Approach to Create and Sustain Community Schools. April 2000.

Community Schools OnLine:

— *Questions and Answers about Community Schools*, Vol. 1, No. 7

— *Community Schools for Excellence Public Education Campaign*, Vol. 1, No. 8

Improving Community School Programs and Services

Characteristics and Features of Community-Based Family Support Programs, Carl Dunst, Family Resource Coalition, Best Practices Project, Commissioned Paper II, 1995, 312-341-0900, ext. 108.

Core Competencies for Youth Workers, A Guided Tour of Youth Development, and *The Handbook of Positive Youth Outcomes, Youth Development Institute*. Networks for Youth Development, Fund for the City of New York, (212) 925-6675.

Health is Academic: A Guide to Coordinated School Health Programs, Editors Eva Marx and Susan Frelick Wooley, Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027.

Homework Assistance & Out-of-School Time: Filling the Need, Finding a Balance, Susan O'Connor & Kate McGuire, National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 1998, www.niost.org or 781-283-3497.

Improving Results for Children, Youth and Families: A Comprehensive Guide to Ideas and Help: "Where the Tube Hits the Road: Providing Services, Supports and Opportunities that Improve the Lives of Children, Youth, and Families," Karen Pittman & Michele Cahill, Center for Youth Development and Policy Research. Vol. I., 202-884-8404.

Making the MOST of Out-of-School Time: The Human Side of Quality, 11 min. video. National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 1998, www.niost.org or 781-283-3497.

The NSACA Standards for Quality School-Age Care, edited by Janette Roman, National School-Age Care Alliance, www.nsaca.org or 617-298-5012.

Where the Kids Are: How to Work with Schools to Create Elementary School-Based Health Centers, National Health and Education Consortium, c/o the Institute for Educational Leadership, 202-822-8405.

Youth Development: A Primer, Wanda E. Fleming & Elaine Johnson, Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, 1996, 202-884-8267.

Finding Funding for Community School Initiatives

Getting to The Bottom Line: State and Community Strategies for Financing Comprehensive Community Service Systems, Frank Farrow and Charles Bruner, NCSI Clearinghouse, 1993, 515-280-9027.

Investing in the Future: Child Care Financing Options for the Public and Private Sectors, Child Care Action Campaign, 1992, 212-239-0138.

Resources from The Finance Project (www.financeproject.org or 202-628-4200):

Finding Funding: A Guide to Federal Sources for Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives, Nancy Reder, March 2000.

Financing After-School Programs, Robert Halpurn, Carol Cohen, and Sharon Deich, May 2000.

Financing Family Resource Centers: A Guide to Funding Sources and Strategies, Sara Watson and Miriam Westheimer, April 2000.

State Program and Financing Policies for School-Age Children and Youth, Barbara Langford and Amy Dawson, December 2000.

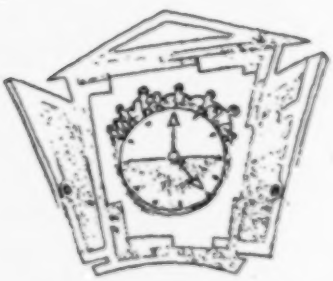
Strategy Briefs on Innovating Financing Strategies:

- *Creating Dedicated Local Revenue Sources for Out-of-School Time Initiatives*, September 1999;
- *Using TANF to Finance Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives*, October 1999;
- *Maximizing Federal Food and Nutrition Funds for Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives*, February 2000;
- *Financing Facilities for Community School Programs*, August 2000;
- *Maximizing Medicaid Funding to Support Health and Mental Health Services for School-Age Children and Youth, October 2000;*
- *Accessing Tobacco Settlement Funds to Support Services for School-Age Children and Youth*, October 2000.

ABOUT THE FINANCE PROJECT

The Finance Project is non-profit policy research, technical assistance, and information organization that was created to help improve outcomes for children, families, and communities nationwide. Its mission is to support decision making that produces and sustains good results for children, families and communities by developing and disseminating information, knowledge, tools, and technical assistance for improved policies, programs, and financing strategies. Since its inception in 1994, The Finance Project has become an unparalleled resource on issues and strategies related to the financing of education and others supports and services for children, families, and community development.

This tool is part of a series of technical assistance resources on financing and sustaining out-of-school time and community school initiatives developed by The Finance Project with support from the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds. These tools and resources are intended to assist policy makers, program developers and community leaders in developing financing and sustainability strategies to support effective out-of-school time and community school initiatives.



Out-of-School Time Project
www.financeproject.org

ABOUT THE COALITION FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The Coalition for Community Schools mobilizes the resources and capacity of multiple sectors and institutions to create a united movement for community schools. The Coalition brings together local, state and national organizations that represent individuals and groups engaged in creating and sustaining community schools, including parents, youth, community residents, teachers, principals, school superintendents and boards, youth development and community-based organizations, neighborhood associations, civic groups, higher education, business, government, and private funders. The coalition disseminates information, connects people and resources, and educates the general public.

The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) staffs the Coalition for Community Schools. IEL — a non-profit, nonpartisan organization based in Washington, D.C. — has provided policy and leadership assistance to people and institutions to work together since 1964.

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